IN THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of categorizing an individual customer, comprising the steps of:

selecting and storing in a computer a measure on which the status of the individual customer is to be analyzed;

selecting and storing in the computer a calculation period;

~~selecting and storing in the computer a comparison method;~~

causing the computer to compute a lifecycle factor for the individual customer, the lifecycle factor being computed by determining an absolute value of a difference of the selected measure and by multiplying the determined absolute value with a percentage measure growth of the selected measure, both the difference and the percentage measure growth being determined over two selected historical periods <u>within the selected calculation period</u> ~~according to the selected comparison method~~, and

categorizing the individual customer by evaluating a plurality of categorization criteria, at least one of the plurality of categorization criteria including the computed lifecycle factor.

2.   (Previously Submitted) The method of Claim 1, wherein the measure is selected from a group including number of orders, quantity of purchase and revenue attributable to the individual customer.

3.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the calculation period is selected from a group including daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually and yearly.

4.   (Canceled)

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5.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the categorizing step assigns a customer to one of a plurality of stages according to which of the plurality of categorization criteria is satisfied.

6.   (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the plurality of stages includes at least one of New, Growing, Stable, Declining, Defected and Insignificant.

7.   (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the New stage is based upon a date at which an account is established for the customer.

8.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of selecting the customer according to at least one of a plurality of customer selection parameters.

9.   (Original) The method of Claim 8, wherein the customer selection parameters include market segment, customer category, operating unit and geography.

10.   (Original) The method of Claim 9, wherein the geography customer selection parameter includes at least one of a plurality of geographical sub-parameters, including area, country, region, state/province and city.

11.   (Original) The method of Claim 8, wherein the customer selection step includes the step of accessing a remote database wherein customer information for a plurality of customers is stored.

12.   (Original) The method of Claim 11, wherein the accessing step accesses the database over a computer network.

13. **(Original)** The method of Claim 12, wherein the computer network includes the Internet.

14. **(Canceled)**

15. **(Currently Amended)** A computer system configured for categorizing an individual customer, comprising:

at least one processor;

at least one data storage device;

a plurality of processes spawned by said at least one processor, the processes including processing logic for:

selecting and storing in the data storage device a measure on which the status of the individual customer is to be analyzed;

selecting and storing in the data storage device a calculation period;

~~selecting a comparison method and storing the selected comparison method in the data storage device;~~

at least one of the processes causing the processor to compute ~~computing~~ a lifecycle factor for the individual customer, the lifecycle factor being computed by determining an absolute value of a difference of the selected measure and by multiplying the determined absolute value with a percentage measure growth of the selected measure, both the difference and the percentage measure growth being determined over two selected historical periods <u>within the selected calculation period</u> ~~according to the selected comparison method~~, and

categorizing the individual customer by evaluating a plurality of categorization criteria, at least one of the plurality of categorization criteria including the computed lifecycle factor.

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16.   **(Previously Submitted)** The computer system of Claim 15, wherein the measure is selected from a group including number of orders, quantity of purchase and revenue attributable to the individual customer.

17.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 15, wherein the calculation period is selected from a group including daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually and yearly.

18.   **(Canceled)**

19.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 15, wherein the categorizing step assigns a customer to one of a plurality of stages according to which of the plurality of categorization criteria is satisfied.

20.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 19, wherein the plurality of stages includes at least one of New, Growing, Stable, Declining, Defected and Insignificant.

21.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 20, wherein the New stage is based upon a date at which an account is established for the customer.

22.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 15, wherein the processes further include processing logic for selecting the customer according to at least one of a plurality of customer selection parameters.

23.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 22, wherein the customer selection parameters include market segment, customer category, operating unit and geography.

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24.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 23, wherein the geography customer selection parameter includes at least one of a plurality of geographical sub-parameters, including area, country, region, state/province and city.

25.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 22, wherein the customer selection step includes the step of accessing a remote database wherein customer information for a plurality of customers is stored.

26.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 25, wherein the accessing step accesses the database over a computer network.

27.   **(Original)** The computer system of Claim 26, wherein the computer network includes the Internet.

28.   **(Canceled)**

29.   **(Currently Amended)** A machine-readable medium having data stored thereon representing sequences of instructions which, when executed by a computing device, causes said computing device to categorize an individual customer by performing the steps of:

selecting and storing in the computing device a measure on which the status of the individual customer is to be analyzed;

selecting and storing in the computing device a calculation period;

~~selecting and storing in the computing device a comparison method;~~

computing a lifecycle factor for the individual customer, the lifecycle factor being computed by determining an absolute value of a difference of the selected measure and by multiplying the determined absolute value with a percentage measure growth of the selected

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measure, both the difference and the percentage measure growth being determined over two selected historical periods <u>within the selected calculation period</u> ~~according to the selected comparison method~~, and

categorizing the individual customer by evaluating a plurality of categorization criteria, at least one of the plurality of categorization criteria including the computed lifecycle factor.

30. **(Previously Submitted)** The medium of Claim 29, wherein the measure is selected from a group including number of orders, quantity of purchase and revenue attributable to the individual customer.

31. **(Original)** The medium of Claim 29, wherein the calculation period is selected from a group including daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually and yearly.

32. **(Canceled)**

33. **(Original)** The medium of Claim 29, wherein the categorizing step assigns a customer to one of a plurality of stages according to which of the plurality of categorization criteria is satisfied.

34. **(Original)** The medium of Claim 33, wherein the plurality of stages includes at least one of New, Growing, Stable, Declining, Defected and Insignificant.

35 **(Original)** The medium of Claim 34, wherein the New stage is based upon a date at which an account is established for the customer.

36. **(Original)** The medium of Claim 29, further comprising the step of selecting the customer according to at least one of a plurality of customer selection parameters.

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37.	(Original) The medium of Claim 36, wherein the customer selection parameters include market segment, customer category, operating unit and geography.

38.	(Original) The medium of Claim 37, wherein the geography customer selection parameter includes at least one of a plurality of geographical sub-parameters, including area, country, region, state/province and city.

39.	(Original) The medium of Claim 36, wherein the customer selection step includes the step of accessing a remote database wherein customer information for a plurality of customers is stored.

40.	(Original) The medium of Claim 39, wherein the accessing step accesses the database over a computer network.

41.	(Original) The medium of Claim 40, wherein the computer network includes the Internet.

42.	(Canceled)